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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 000726

SIPDIS

DEA HQS FOR OC,OI,OID,OEE, OSE  
SECSTATE FOR INL/AF/W,INR/AA,AF/RSA,DS/IP/ITA  
ROME FOR RD BENSON ARD PASQUARELLO  
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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [SNAR](#) [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [NI](#) [PU](#) [NARCOTICS](#)

SUBJECT: DEA VISIT TO GUINEA BISSAU

Classified By: DEA CA SAM GAYE FOR REASONS 1.4 (D AND E)

#### SUMMARY

1. (C) DEA CA Sam Gaye visited Guinea-Bissau, May 18-19, 2006. The purpose of the visit was to meet Bissau-Guinean counter-narcotics officials to discuss trafficking trends, share intelligence, and provide the Judicial Police (PJ) with drug test kits. The PJ pleaded for more resources. The Attorney General (AG) asked for help from the international community to fight drug trafficking through Guinea-Bissau, acknowledging that Guinea-Bissau has become a major transit point for cocaine to Europe. CA Gaye informed the AG the UNODC office in Dakar, Senegal, is aware of the threat cocaine trafficking poses to Europe and UNODC plans to do an assessment of the drug situation in Guinea-Bissau. Meanwhile, CA Gaye advised the AG that DEA will engage the PJ operationally, starting with investigating allegations of a clandestine cocaine-processing laboratory run by Colombians in Guinea-Bissau. CA Gaye told the AG that DEA is interested in verifying claims the Colombians, along with some former police officials, are constructing clandestine airstrips in remote villages in Guinea-Bissau. END SUMMARY.

#### THE PJ SAYS IT LACKS RESOURCES TO FIGHT DRUG TRAFFICKING

2. (C) On May 19, 2006, CA Gaye met Orlando Artur Antonio La Silva, Director General of Judicial Police (the equivalent of the FBI). CA Gaye had visited Director La Silva during his previous trip early this year. La Silva explained his agency lacks the resources needed to fight drug trafficking in Guinea-Bissau. The PJ cannot respond to information regarding suspicious vessels or aircraft due to insufficient logistical support. The Director said Colombians and Lebanese nationals control drug trafficking in the area. The Director cited a recent incident where a local police commander in Guinea lent his vehicle to Lebanese traffickers to drive to Guinea-Bissau to pick up a drug shipment. The commander reportedly provided the Lebanese traffickers with a letter requesting free passage at checkpoints.

3. (C) The PJ's annual investigative budget for all major crimes, including counter narcotics, is 6 million CFA francs (CFAF)(USD 11,500.00). The Director said after CA Gaye's visit early this year, the Prime Minister's office created a joint task force (JTF) to address the growing drug problem in Guinea-Bissau. According to Director La Silva, the JTF is just a "document" with no real institutional vitality.

4. (C) Director La Silva asked CA Gaye for Embassy Dakar to continue to raise the seriousness of the drug situation with senior government officials, including the President. CA Gaye told La Silva that Ambassador Jacobs in Dakar is concerned about the increase of drug trafficking through Guinea-Bissau and the impact it may have on the fragile democracy. The Director added the international community needs to help Guinea-Bissau, and at the same time, put pressure on the country's leadership to do its part. The Director claimed that high-ranking military officers as well as senior government officials are involved in drug trafficking. The Director stated the military has "big guns" and more clout than the PJ. He said that the Government is reluctant to move against senior military figures for fear that they may foment a military coup and seize power again.

#### NO EVIDENCE OF NEXUS WITH TERRORISTS

5. (C) La Silva said there was no evidence of a drug nexus with terrorism in Guinea-Bissau, although he did not rule out the possibility. However, he confirmed that, periodically, he received terrorist listings, including information on frozen bank accounts, from Interpol. He commented that both the borders and financial system in Guinea-Bissau are porous, so "anything is possible".

#### DRUG TEST KITS AS SYMBOL OF COOPERATION

6. (C) CA Gaye provided the PJ with drug test kits and training on the use of drug test kits. The PJ had not used drug test kits before and were excited about their new tools.

The chief said the equipment was a symbolic gesture of cooperation. They can now field-test suspicious substances, something never done before.

17. (C) Director La Silva informed CA Gaye that the four Nigerians arrested in December 2005 were still being held. However, one of them became paralyzed and is now hospitalized. (COMMENT: Guinea-Bissau has no maximum security prison. END COMMENT.)

ATTORNEY GENERAL ASKS FOR INTERNATIONAL HELP

18. (C) On May 19, CA Gaye met Fernando Riberro, Guinea-Bissau's Attorney General (AG), and his deputy. The AG is new in his position. CA Gaye provided an overview of drug trafficking trends in the region. The AG asked for help from the international community to fight drug trafficking through Guinea-Bissau. The AG stated few of his countrymen can afford to buy drugs, but his country has become a major transit point for cocaine to Europe. CA Gaye informed the AG the UNODC office in Dakar, Senegal, is aware of the threat cocaine trafficking poses to Europe and UNODC plans to do an assessment of the drug situation in Guinea-Bissau. Meanwhile, CA Gaye advised the AG that DEA will engage the PJ operationally, starting with investigating allegations of a clandestine cocaine-processing laboratory run by Colombians in Guinea-Bissau. CA Gaye told the AG that DEA is interested in verifying claims the Colombians, along with some former police officials, are constructing clandestine airstrips in remote villages in Guinea-Bissau. The AG reiterated his government's full cooperation on counter narcotics.

BROWNE